

**Minutes of  
HIGHER EDUCATION TASK FORCE  
June 8, 2006 (Third Meeting)  
10:00 a.m.  
SC Commission on Higher Education Offices  
Columbia, South Carolina**

*In attendance:*

**Task Force Members Present**

Mr. Lyles, Glenn, Chairman  
Col. Claude Eichelberger  
Ms. Alyson Goff  
Dr. Ray Greenberg  
Dr. Bettie Rose Horne (via phone)  
Mr. Scott Ludlow  
Mr. Jim Sanders  
Mr. Mike Sisk  
Mr. Tex Small

**Task Force Members Absent**

None

**Invited Speakers**

President Jim Barker, Clemson University  
The Honorable John Courson  
Mr. Charlie FitzSimons, SC. Independent  
Colleges & Univ.  
Dr. Tom Hallman, USC Aiken  
Dr. Barry Russell, State Technical College  
System  
Dr. Chris Plyler, USC Regional Campuses  
Mr. Eddie Shannon, Tuition Grants Commission

**CHE Commissioners & Staff**

Dr. Layton McCurdy, Chairman  
Dr. James Atkins  
Ms. Camille Brown  
Ms. Julie Carullo  
Mr. Gary Glenn  
Dr. Lynn Kelley  
Ms. Lynn Metcalf  
Dr. Gail Morrison  
Dr. Mike Raley  
Ms. Beth Rogers  
Ms. Karen Wham  
Dr. Karen Woodfaulk

**Office of the Governor**

Ms. Rita Allison (and CHE)  
Mr. Chris Austin

**Other Guests**

Ms. Joren Bartlett, State Technical College  
System  
Mr. Bill Bragdon, USC Columbia  
Ms. Kathy Coleman, Clemson University  
Mr. Mark D'Amico, State Technical College  
System  
Dr. Braden Hosch, USC Aiken  
Dr. David Hunter, USC Regional Campuses  
Ms. Karen Jones, Winthrop University  
Dr. Elise Jorgens, College of Charleston  
Ms. Jennifer Lake, USC Aiken  
Mr. Wayne Landrith, SC Independent Colleges  
& Universities  
Ms. Angie Leiding, Clemson University  
Ms. Beth McGinnis, Clemson University  
Mr. Tom Moore, USC Columbia  
Ms. Robin Moseley, Senate Education  
Committee  
Dr. Phyllis Myers, Trident Technical College  
Col. Jim Openshaw, The Citadel  
Mr. Craig Parks, Senate Finance Committee  
Mr. Lawrence Ray, State Technical College  
System  
Ms. Sheryl Turner-Watts, USC Upstate  
Mr. Bryce Wilson, SC Budget & Control Board

**Media Representatives**

Mr. John Monk, The State newspaper

Meeting called to order at 10:15 a.m.

## 1. Opening Remarks: Lyles Glenn

Mr. Lyles Glenn opened the meeting and asked that members of the Task Force and all in attendance introduce themselves. He offered a special welcome to Dr. Layton McCurdy, Chairman of the Commission on Higher Education (CHE).

## 2. Approval of Minutes from May 5 and June 1, 2006

Mr. Glenn thanked members of the CHE staff and the Governor's Office for their work in putting together very comprehensive minutes of both the May 5 and June 1, 2006 Task Force Meeting minutes. A motion was **made** (Mr. Sisk), **approved** (Mr. Ludlow), and **carried** to approve these minutes as written.

## 3. Explanation of Materials

Ms. Julie Carullo offered information about various materials requested by the Task Force members which had been distributed to them. *A copy of these materials are filed with these minutes and are available upon request.*

## 4. Presentation by President Jim Barker, Clemson University

Though the agenda reflected that Senator Courson would deliver the first presentation, Mr. Glenn asked President Barker to begin with his presentation as President Barker had arrived early and the meeting was ahead of schedule. President Barker's presentation focused on the research institutions' unique role in economic development, their mandate to provide high-level academic rigor, and their need to compete on a national rather than a state level. *A copy of President Barker's remarks is filed with these minutes and is available upon request.*

*The information below reflects the questions and discussion of Task Force members that followed:*

At the invitation of Mr. Glenn, **Dr. Greenberg** offered comments from his perspective as a president of a research institution. He stated that he believes there has been a significant transformation in cooperation between the research institutions in the last few years, which he believes is largely attributable to the leadership of those institutions. He pointed to the example of the cooperation of the three research institutions in the area of bioengineering education. Dr. Greenberg noted that an important omission from what the group was focusing on is the issue of quality of the educational experience which he feels is essential to compete in the global economy. Discussion about selectivity in admissions took place between Dr. Greenberg and President Barker. Mr. Barker commented on a bridge program that has been developed between Clemson and Tri-County Technical College that enables students who are close to meeting Clemson entrance requirements to enter Tri-County for general education classes and transfer seamlessly to Clemson. He remarked that there should be no apologies for trying to improve. He credited LIFE and Palmetto Fellow programs with playing a significant role in the making the change that is taking place possible and commented that we should embrace and applaud change that is helping to better the state.

**Mr. Sanders** asked President Barker why there seems to be a great deal of tension and misunderstanding between the various SC constituencies related to higher education. President Barker responded it had been his experience that tension occurs when change collides with tradition. He indicated that in SC that change is occurring because the institutions are growing and becoming more selective in admissions at a time of great budget uncertainty.

**Mr. Sanders** commented that it appeared there was no overall plan regarding higher education in SC and asked President Barker to express his thoughts on that point. President Barker responded that, in absence of such a plan, the research institutions have developed an overall plan for themselves in conjunction with the Department of Commerce. He stated each sector would benefit from having such a plan as would the State in having an overall coordinated plan.

**Mr. Glenn** asked President Barker about the process for the establishment of the campus in Charleston and inquired as to whether it should have gone through CHE. President Barker distributed a handout regarding Clemson's presence across the state. He indicated that, based on Clemson's land grant experience, working hands-on with the industrial sectors of different regions of the state has proven most effective. He explained that academic programs related to Clemson's presence in Charleston had been approved by the CHE. He further stated that Clemson was not opposed to the concept of clustering those programs in one location.

## **5. Presentation by The Honorable John Courson, Chairman, Senate Education Committee**

Senator Courson began by sharing the structure, function and operation of the Senate Education Committee. Senator Courson indicated that the structure of higher education may be dysfunctional and provided examples including efforts to make USC Sumter a four-year institution without going through the process of obtaining approval of USC Board of Trustees or CHE; the lack of CHE approval on the Clemson's restoration institute in Charleston; and the efforts of Spartanburg Technical College to change their name to include the word community rather than technical. Senator Courson stated that the research institutions had done a very good job over the last few years and commented favorably about the endowed chairs program. One area of concern he had with regard to the research institutions, however, was that two had approximately 30% of their student populations are from out-of-state. Senator Courson delivered details about current appropriations for higher education and the relationship between that and state scholarship funds. He referenced the state's higher education structure again and indicated that he believes that the research institutions need to be viewed in a context different from the other institutions because of the nature of the mission of those institutions.

*The information below reflects the questions and discussion of Task Force members that followed:*

**Mr. Ludlow** asked Senator Courson to share his thoughts about why it appears that CHE's initiatives and proposals are not being funded and institutions are going directly to the legislature with some of their funding requests. Senator Courson discussed state funding and the prospects for increased funding in future years.

**Ms. Goff** asked Senator Courson what are the Senate's expectations of higher education. Senator Courson responded that in general the expectation is to try to develop, as much as possible, a seamless K-16 educational structure. He further stated that he believes this is being done.

**Dr. Horne** asked Senator Courson for his view on whether a statewide strategic plan is needed which takes into account all the institutional sectors. Senator Courson indicated that the structure is evolving and that efforts of the research institutions have been well received. He suggested that perhaps separate governances for the research institutions and the teaching institutions would be appropriate. He further stated that the technical colleges already have a governance structure in place, and they need to consider how to approach the community college structure. He explained we are in a legislative state and a Board of Regents structure is not likely politically.

**Colonel Eichelberger** asked Senator what type higher education governing structure would work. Senator Courson responded by saying that he favored three different governing bodies for the research, teaching, and technical institutions with a bridge capability between them as well as a bridge capability with K-12.

**Dr. Greenberg** asked Senator Courson how the work of this task force might be most helpful to General Assembly. Senator Courson responded that it was most important to develop a structure that works.

**Mr. Small** asked Senator Courson about discussion of a possible movement of funds from the scholarship programs toward K-12 and how the quality of higher education might be affected. Senator Courson responded that he would not support such movement as he believed it would have a great effect on SC's efforts to keep the best and brightest students in the state. He stated that quality might be directly related to the question of whether there might be too many institutions of higher education in SC.

## **6. Presentation by Chancellor Tom Hallman, USC Aiken, for the Comprehensive Institutions**

Dr. Hallman delivered his presentation on SC's comprehensive teaching universities. The presentation included material on enrollment data, scholarship and financial aid information, retention and graduation statistics, tuition and state support figures, a vision for higher education support measures, and examples of how these universities are good stewards of the State's resources. *A copy of Chancellor Hallman's presentation is filed with these minutes and is available upon request.*

*The information below reflects the questions and discussion of Task Force members that followed:*

**Colonel Eichelberger** asked Chancellor Hallman to clarify whether he had stated that minority participation impacts the quality of the teaching institutions. Chancellor Hallman replied that one of the measures used to define quality is the average SAT score of an institution's students and since this sector serves a larger component of the minority population, it is not surprising the average SAT score is lower. Discussion followed, and Chancellor Hallman stated he did not feel that this measure offered a true reflection of quality.

**Mr. Ludlow** asked Chancellor Hallman if this sector had the capacity for growth without having to significantly expand facilities. Chancellor Hallman responded he believed each of the institutions in his sector may have a different answer to that question. Considerable discussion about this topic followed.

**Mr. Sanders** repeated the question he had asked earlier of President Barker regarding tension between the various constituencies related to higher education in SC. He also asked Chancellor Hallman whether he thought a clear overall higher education statewide plan would be helpful to all constituencies. Chancellor Hallman responded he believed a great deal of interest had been demonstrated with regard to a overall statewide plan, and it would be most beneficial. He also stated his concurrence with President Barker's earlier response. In addition, he suggested limited resources were a source of the tension and this tension began with issues concerning Performance Funding.

**Dr. Greenberg** commented it might be worthwhile to explore how the three USC campuses which are under one governance structure operate differently than the institutions which each have their own governance structure. Mr. Glenn agreed this would be a valuable topic and suggested the Task Force may want to revisit it with Chancellor Hallman at a future date.

*Members took a brief break before continuing with the remaining presentations.*

## **7. Presentation by Dr. Chris Plyler, Executive Dean, Two-Year USC Regional Campuses & Continuing Education**

Dr. Plyler delivered his presentation in which he described the history, function, and activities of USC's two-year regional campuses. *A copy of a brochure which contains much of the information presented is filed with these minutes and is available upon request.* During the course of his presentation and in response to questions of Task Force members, it was stated 28% of the students who attend one of the regional campuses pursue four-year degrees. Of that 28%, students are less likely to apply for an Associate of Arts degree because having received it makes them ineligible to continue to receive lottery tuition assistance.

*The information below reflects the questions and discussion of Task Force members that followed:*

**Dr. Horne** asked Dr. Plyler if any use of distance education had been made in order to assist place-bound students who have obtained their Associates degrees to continue to work toward a Bachelors degree. Dr. Plyler replied they did in fact have a program called the Palmetto Program under development in conjunction with the senior campuses which is a degree program with three areas of concentration. The program will be delivered almost entirely through distance education.

**Colonel Eichelberger** asked Dr. Plyler about the movement of students from the regional campuses to the four-year institutions. Dr. Plyler explained some students who have not met the admissions requirements for the USC Columbia campus are able to complete 30 hours at one of the regional campuses, achieve a 2.2 GPA, and continue at the Columbia campus.

**Mr. Sanders** asked Dr. Plyler if he was aware of an overall plan for education in South Carolina and Dr. Plyler replied he was not. Mr. Sanders also inquired about the cause of the tension among the higher education constituencies. Dr. Plyler responded he thought declining resources was the primary contributing factor.

**Dr. McCurdy** asked Dr. Plyler why each of the USC campuses is considered as a separate line item in the distribution of state appropriations. Though Dr. Plyler stated he thought this was really a question for members of the legislature, he indicated it may be due to survivability.

**Mr. Small** asked whether there were technical colleges in each of the two year regional campus communities, and if so, did any collaboration exist with them. Dr. Plyler responded that there were avenues of cooperation and gave examples of cooperation in each of the regional campus areas.

**Mr. Glenn** asked Dr. Plyler what the regional campuses brought to the table in terms of their legal connection with USC Columbia. Dr. Plyler responded he felt the regional campuses were one of the best kept secrets in the State with regard to offering the beginning of an excellent liberal arts education to students who are struggling with financing their education.

**Dr. Greenberg** asked Dr. Plyler if the four regional campuses operate independently on a day-to-day basis, and Dr. Plyler replied they did.

**Mr. Glenn** asked Dr. Plyler if the regional campuses are charged for the administrative services they receive and Dr. Plyler replied they were.

**Dr. Greenberg** asked why the regional campuses are counted as separate institutions when they are accredited as one with the main campus of USC in Columbia. Discussion followed about the total number of institutions in SC and how the number is derived.

#### **8. Presentation by Dr. Barry Russell, State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education**

Dr. Russell began his presentation by providing a brief history and background of the State Technical College System. He then shared information about how the system provides access to higher education, the governance and structure of the system, and its impact on the State. *Dr. Russell's comments and the materials he distributed that provide additional information about the System are filed with these minutes and are available upon request.*

*The information below reflects the questions and discussion of Task Force members that followed:*

**Mr. Sisk** inquired about the anticipated growth of the technical system from a budgetary standpoint. Dr. Russell replied they have worked hard to be more effective and efficient with resources, but sustaining System growth will be difficult without additional resources.

**Mr. Small** asked Dr. Russell whether the State provides anything to the System for FTE growth. Dr. Russell stated there is an internal redistribution of FTE which has been difficult for the System and could be solved with adequate funding appropriated for enrollment growth. In response to Mr. Small's question, Dr. Russell stated the System was currently being funded at a rate of 48.6% of its MRR. In response to Mr. Small's question about the overlap between courses offered by Central Carolina Technical College and USC Sumter, Dr. Russell stated he believed they offered similar courses in general education. **Colonel Eichelberger** commented the courses offered at Central Carolina Technical are more technical in nature.

**Mr. Sisk** asked how big of a role remedial education played in the Technical College System. Dr. Russell responded he believed remedial education represented approximately 5% of their efforts. He also stated this is a discouraging figure, but the average age of a technical college student is late 20's and the need for some remediation is expected. He further stated communication has taken place with the K-12 sector emphasizing the rigor and requirements of the technical college programs.

#### **9. Presentation by Mr. Charlie FitzSimons, President SC Independent Colleges & Universities (SCICU) and Mr. Eddie Shannon, Executive Director, SC Tuition Grants Commission**

Mr. FitzSimons delivered his presentation which provided an overview of independent higher education in South Carolina. *A copy of that presentation is filed with these minutes and is available upon request.* In his presentation Mr. FitzSimons noted there are 20 SACS accredited member institutions in the SCICU whose membership criteria is set up identically to the eligibility criteria for participation in the Tuition Grant program.

During the course of his presentation, Mr. FitzSimons noted that the independent institutions are allocated 6% of the State's higher education appropriations and produce 26% of the state's four-year degrees. In response to **Dr. Greenberg's** question about whether the independent institutions should get 6% of the higher education appropriations, Mr. FitzSimons replied state financial assistance makes some of the independent institutions affordable for their students. Discussion took place about the average debt incurred by students at the independent institutions as well as about the number of students who do not retain their scholarships.

**Dr. Horne** asked Mr. FitzSimons why it was necessary to have a separate agency to disburse scholarships to the independent institutions. Mr. FitzSimons responded, in his personal opinion, there was no logical reason to have two agencies handling this responsibility. He stated that an inherent fear that monies might be shifted from the public to the private sector and vice versa if the administration of the programs was merged was most likely the reason for the separation.

**Mr. Shannon** then delivered his presentation entitled "Giving SC Students a Choice." *A copy of this material is filed with these minutes and is available upon request.* Mr. Shannon provided a quick overview of the program.

*The information below reflects the questions and discussion of Task Force members that followed:*

**Mr. Ludlow** asked Mr. FitzSimons about his perspective on the differences between operating private versus public institutions. Mr. FitzSimons replied there is no bureaucracy in terms of procurement with the independent institutions as is the case in the public sector. He stated the independent institutions cannot afford to risk financial investment in a new program unless they are certain it will be self-sustaining whereas the public institutions have enough infrastructure to support the establishment of new programs.

**Mr. Glenn** then announced that the next meeting of the Task Force would take place on July 24, 2006 beginning at 10:00 a.m. A summary of today's meeting will be circulated among the Task Force members prior to that time. Presentations about comparative systems of higher education in other parts of the country will be delivered at that meeting. **Mr. Small** then requested that the Task Force be provided with an analysis on the statement that higher education funding amounts to 17% of the total State budget. **Dr. Greenberg** commented that the Task Force members had been bombarded with a great deal of information and asked in the future if it were possible to have key points in materials summarized prior to circulation. He also stated that the group needed to get to a point of articulating the issues. There was a brief discussion.

The meeting was then adjourned at 3:00 p.m.